

INVENTOR(S): MICHAEL R. BUTLER ET AL

**INVENTION: PORTABLE WATERPROOF
CASE FOR STORING ITEMS**

PATENT TYPE: UTILITY

PORTABLE, WATERPROOF CASE FOR STORING ITEMS

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention pertains to portable storage containers, and, more particularly, pertains to a lightweight, waterproof, portable storage case for storing items while engaged in outdoor activities, and especially activities involving water sports or recreation.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Portable storage devices are a common and necessary adjunct for the continuously active, on-the-go present day society. From the ubiquitous backpacks not only borne by students from kindergarten to the college ranks but by attendees at sporting events and musical concerts to the small, lightweight pouches worn on the waist, individuals carry items from water bottles to baby bottles, cellular phones to first aid kits, personal identification papers to personal protection devices such as mace or pepper spray in such varied storage packs or containers. It is for both convenience and personal safety and security that individuals in our hectic society desire to have such items available and easily and immediately accessible.

Moreover, the range of outdoor activities has greatly expanded in recent years to include such activities as parachuting, white water rafting, hiking and backpacking, rock climbing, hand gliding, and cross country cycling. Thus, the desire to carry along personal items is accentuated by the fact that much of our recreation now takes place at large, hectic amusement parks such as Disney World and at parks devoted exclusively to water activities or in remote and not easily accessible areas of expansive national forests, trails and parks. In addition, the variety of water sports and activities has increased to

include scuba diving, skiing, snorkeling, jet skiing and paragliding. For personal safety and convenience individuals involved in such recreational activities still desire to carry along certain items of both a personal and utilitarian nature.

Thus, not only are small, personal pouches or packs desirable but it is also desirable to have available personal pouches or packs that are portable and waterproof.

For example the prior art discloses several pouches that are portable and, to some degree, waterproof.

The Inagaki patents (U.S. patents 4,551,123 and 4,679,724) disclose waterproof paper containers and methods of manufacturing such containers. Both patents disclose a paper tube sandwiched between heat-shrinkable plastic film with the manufacturing method including the removal of residual air so as to avoid the problems of paper deformation or paper-film separation.

The Blakely et al. patent (U.S. patent 5,135,144) discloses a belt-worn medical supply pouch for carrying medical items such as drug cartridges and syringes, and the pouch includes a compartment for a heating element to thereby maintain the drugs at an appropriate temperature when the pouch is being worn, for example, by a veterinarian attending to farm animals during the winter season.

Nonetheless, there is still a need for a small, lightweight, portable, waterproof container especially applicable and usable for individuals involved in or proximate to water activities and sports.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention comprehends a lightweight, portable, waterproof storage case for storing personal items and effects ranging from personal papers and money to

eye wear, and which the individual can carry while engaged in various types of physical activities.

The storage case includes a unitary body having a continuous side wall, an open upper end, a closed bottom end and an interior storage cavity or chamber for receiving
5 and storage of items therein. A cap or lid is pivotally mounted to the side wall of the case for closing the case and protecting and sealing the contents stored within the chamber from the external environment, and especially from moisture. The upper end of the case includes a rubber seal or gasket to facilitate the protection and sealing of the contents stored within the chamber. The case also includes a side or secondary compartment
10 integrally formed on the side wall of the case body for storing therein personal papers and items such as a driver's license or credit cards.

The individual can attach the case to his or her body in several ways for carrying the case. The case can be carried on the individual's neck by a lanyard or cord or the case can be attached to the waistband of the individual's pants or to the belt by a side
15 waist clip. In addition, the individual can attach the case to his or her hand or waist by a Velcro strap or the individual could attach the case about his or her waist by using an elongated Velcro strap.

It is an objective of the present invention to provide a storage case that is lightweight, portable, and water proof and that can be easily carried by individuals
20 engaged in various outdoor activities.

It is another objective of the present invention to provide a storage case that can be unobtrusively carried on the individual's neck, wrist, arm or waist while the individual is engaged in various outdoor activities.

It is yet another objective of the present invention to provide a storage case that includes several compartments for storing both paper and non-paper personal items and effects.

These and other objects, features, and advantages will become apparent to those skilled in the art upon a perusal of the followed detailed description of the invention read in conjunction with the accompany drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 is a perspective view of the portable, lightweight, waterproof storage case of the present invention showing the use of a cord for attaching the case about the neck, wrist, arm or ankle of the individual;

Figure 2 is sectioned elevational view of the storage case of figure 1 illustrating the use of side waist clip for attaching the storage case to the individual's belt or waist band; and

Figure 3 is a side elevational view of the storage case first shown in figure 1 illustrating the storage case partially submerged in water while maintaining its water proof capability.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Illustrated in figures 1 – 3 is a lightweight, portable, waterproof storage container or case 10 that can be unobtrusively carried by and on the individual while the individual is engaged in various outdoor activities such as hiking, biking, backpacking, swimming, hunting, fishing, rock climbing, hang gliding, canoeing, white water rafting, or attending fair, carnivals, amusement parks such as Six Flags and Disney World, and water parks. The case 10 is waterproof so that personal items and effects such as drivers license, credit

cards, park passes, money, personal identification papers, eye wear and sunglasses can be stored therein and readily available for presentation and use as the need arises. Carrying such personal items and effects on oneself obviates the problems of security and theft that occur when, for example, such items are stored in lockers, bins, and baskets that are the
5 common storage means used at parks and other outdoor facilities.

As shown in figures 1 – 3, the portable, waterproof storage case 10 of the present invention includes a unitary case body 12 having a length that is greater than the width. The storage case 10 is preferably composed of a transparent or semi-transparent plastic. The storage case body 12 includes an open upper end 14, an opposite closed bottom or
10 floor portion 18, and a continuous side wall 20. The side wall 20 further defines an interior storage chamber or cavity 22 for receiving and holding therein the above-described personal items and effects. In addition, as shown in figures 1 and 2, the storage case 10 includes an ancillary or secondary side storage compartment 24 that is integrally formed on the side wall 20 of the body 12 of the storage case 10. The side compartment
15 24 is specifically useful for storing therein paper items such as a driver license, amusement park passes and tickets, credit cards, etc.

As shown in figures 1 – 3, the storage case 10 includes a lid or cap 26 pivotally or hingeably mounted to the body 12 of the case 10 adjacent the upper end 14. The lid 26 pivots upon a pivot member or rod 28 for opening and closing the lid 26. The lid 26
20 includes a recess 30 to further accommodate items held within the storage chamber 22 and a prong or catch 32 that extends outwardly from the lid 26 on the side of the lid 26 opposite of where the lid 26 is pivotally secured to the body 12 of the storage case 10.

In order to secure the lid 26 to the storage case body 12 and protect the items contained in the storage chamber 22 from the external environment, the storage case 10 includes a closure member 34 pivotally mounted to the side wall 20 of the body 12 of the case 10. The closure member 34 includes a catch member 36 for locking onto the prong 32 of the lid 26 and a pivotal finger locking and releasing member 38. When the finger locking and releasing member 38 is pivoted towards the body 12 of the storage case 10 the catch member 36 can be locked onto the prong 32 thus securing the lid 26 to the body 12 of the case 10. Pivoting the finger locking and releasing member 38 away from the body 12 of the case 10 allows for the release of the catch member 36 from the prong 32 so that the lid 26 can be opened.

The storage case 10 of the present invention includes several features to further enhance the safety and waterproof containment of material and items stored within the storage chamber 22. The upper end 14 of the body 12 of the storage case 10 includes a rubber seal or gasket 40 that the lid 26 closes against to assure a waterproof securement of the lid 26 to the upper end 14 of the body 12 of the case 10. Also, the interior chamber 22 is lined with a foam padding 42 to alleviate damage to, for example, eye wear that may occur when the storage case 10 is jostled or shook as a result of the physical activity the individual is undergoing. The interior recess 30 of the lid 26 is also lined with foam padding 44 for the same purpose.

The storage case 10 can be attached or secured to the individual or the individual's clothing in various ways. As shown in figure 1, a cord or lanyard 46 is attached to the lid 26, and the cord 46 can be placed about the individual's neck or wrapped on the wrist or arm. The cord or lanyard 46 can be of a flexible, stretchable

material, such as Velcro for adaptability to individuals of different physical sizes and measurements. Shown in figure 2 is a side waist clip 48 that can be easily placed on and removed from the waistband of the individual's pants or the belt the individual is wearing. In addition, an elongated strap, cord or lanyard, that can also be composed of Velcro can be used for placement or wrapping about the waist of the individual. Thus, these various methods of attaching the storage case 10 to the individual provide for some flexibility in so far as if it is uncomfortable for the individual to have the storage case 10 directly attached to the neck, arm, or wrist, the storage case 10 can still be secured to a portion of the individual's article of clothing.

The foregoing description discloses and describes a preferred embodiment of the invention, and those skilled in the art will understand that various modifications and alterations may be possible and practicable without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention and the following appended claims.